



# Town of Berwyn Heights

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**MAYOR**  
Amanda M. Dewey  
**COUNCIL MEMBERS**  
Jodie A. Kulpa-Eddy (Mayor Pro Tem)  
Christopher S. Brittan Powell  
Jason W. Papanikolas  
Ethan D. Sweep

## Town Meeting Minutes June 10, 2020 | 7:00 pm

This meeting was held by videoconference due to the ongoing COVID-19 health emergency, which prohibits large gatherings and advises Marylanders to remain socially distant. The meeting was broadcast on Berwyn Heights cable TV channels and streamed on the Town website. Residents were given the opportunity to comment by telephone and email.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. Present were outgoing Mayor Stephen Isler, incoming Mayor Amanda Dewey, Mayor Pro Tempore (MPT) Jason Papanikolas, Councilmembers (CM) Jeffrey Jay Osmond, and Ethan Sweep, Mayor Pro Tempore-elect Jodie Kulpa-Eddy and Councilmember-elect Christopher Brittan-Powell. Also present were Town Manager (TM) Maria Broadbent, Treasurer Michelle Rodriguez, Town Clerk Kerstin Harper, Chief Kenneth Antolik, Lieutenant Daniel Unger, Detective Scott Krouse, Police Clerk Mercy Muralles, Code Director Hollyce Goodwin, Public Works Clerk Rosalie Jones, and Co-Chairs of the Walkable, Bikeable Berwyn Heights Task Force (WBBH) Drew Carlisle and James Wilkinson.

### **1. Approval of the Agenda**

Mayor Isler requested a motion to move consideration of a letter to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to New Business. CM Sweep so moved. CM Dewey seconded. The motion passed 5 to 0.

### **2. Ceremonial Items**

**CI-05 – Cpl. Krouse Life Saver Award:** On behalf of Chief Antolik and the Berwyn Heights Police Department, Mayor Isler awarded Cpl. Scott Krouse the *Life Saver's Award* for bravery and selflessness in the line of duty by preventing a suicide on the Cherrywood Lane bridge over the Capital Beltway in February 2020. He also awarded an *Exceptional Duty award* to Cpl. Krouse on behalf of the Council. Cpl. Krouse thanked Chief Antolik and the Council for the recognition and his colleagues for assisting in the rescue, which he considers having been a team effort.

**CI-06 – Employee of the Year Awards:** On behalf of TM Broadbent, Mayor Isler awarded *Employee of the Year* awards to Police Clerk Mercy Muralles, Public Works Administrative Assistant Rosalie Jones and Clerk Kerstin Harper for going beyond their normal duties to carry on the operations of their departments under the state of emergency declared due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

**CI-07 – Citizens of the Year Awards:** On behalf of the Council, CM Dewey presented *Citizen of the Year* awards to Drew Carlisle and James Wilkinson for chairing the Walkable, Bikeable Berwyn Heights Task Force. WBBH worked hard to draft a comprehensive report outlining a vision and

actionable recommendations for making Berwyn Heights safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. Mr. Carlisle and Mr. Wilkinson thanked the Council for the award and said that they plan to stay involved.

**CI-08 – Pride Month Proclamation:** Mayor Isler read a Proclamation expressing the Council’s support for the LGBTQ community of Berwyn Heights. CM Dewey moved to proclaim June 2020 Pride Month in the Town of Berwyn Heights. CM Sweep seconded. The motion passed 5 to 0.

### **3. Approval of Minutes**

CM Sweep moved and MPT Papanikolas seconded to approve the May 13 Town meeting minutes. The motion passed 5 to 0.

### **4. Unfinished Business**

There was none.

### **5. New Business**

**Resolution 07-2020 – Amending Comprehensive Fee & Fine Schedule:** TM Broadbent said it is proposed that the Comprehensive Fee and Fine Schedule be amended to raise the notary fee from \$1 to \$2 per page to more accurately reflect the cost of the service. CM Osmond moved and MPT Papanikolas seconded to approve the amended Fee & Fine Schedule. The motion passed 5 to 0.

**Resolution 08-2020 – CARES Act Funding Request:** TM Broadbent explained that Prince George’s County was authorized to disburse Coronavirus relief funds released by the U.S. Treasury Department. Berwyn Heights applied to be reimbursed for \$193,836 in expenses related to the emergency, including personal protective equipment, hazard pay, vote-by-mail election, support for enabling employees to telework, small businesses relief funding, and disinfecting Town facilities. Council action to approve the funding request is required as part of the application.

Code Compliance Director Goodwin gave an overview of her Department’s outreach efforts to the Berwyn Heights business community, one of the funding requirements under the CARES Act. Businesses were asked whether they are open or closed, had layoffs, and/or made changes to operations. Some 40 businesses said they have remained open throughout the emergency, another 20 had recently reopened and 5 remain closed. Most businesses reported changes in procedures to implement social distancing, PPE and disinfecting measures, and some had reductions in staff.

Cpl. Krouse said he worked with the Code Department to follow up on the outreach efforts. Businesses were very appreciative of the Town making contact and most are ready to go back to work full time.

CM Osmond made a motion to approve the Resolution. CM Sweep seconded. The Council thanked TM Broadbent for being proactive in identifying opportunities for Berwyn Heights at the State and County level. The motion passed 5 to 0.

TM Broadbent gave an update on the Coronavirus State of Emergency. Berwyn Heights declared a State of Emergency on March 13, which was amended on March 23 to make its end coincide with that of the State of Maryland. Prince George’s County has recently experienced a steep increase in COVID-19 cases, probably precluding an opening of Town facilities prior to Labor Day. The Council may want to add worksessions to its meeting schedule, but meetings would likely continue to be held via video conference.

**Resolution 09-2020 – Approval of Contract for Professional Janitorial Services:** TM Broadbent explained that a request for bids was put out for providing janitorial services at all Town buildings. Three bids were received. One was very expensive, another was withdrawn, and the third was from the current contractor. She recommends extending the contract with the current vendor, Ash Maids, for another year. CM Dewey moved, and CM Sweep seconded to approve the contract. The motion passed 5 to 0.

**Letter re: FCC Declaratory Ruling regarding Small Cell Facilities:** TM Broadbent explained that the Council in 2019 adopted Ordinance 125 to authorize the Town to review applications and issue permits to companies seeking to install small cell facilities in the Town right-of-way. The Council has submitted a letter objecting to a proposed rule by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that would further limit the power of municipalities to review and impose standards on the deployment of 5G infrastructure. The letter of opposition has been placed on the agenda for the record.

## **6. Department Reports**

CM Dewey moved to receive all department reports for the record. CM Sweep seconded. The motion passed 5 to 0.

**Administration:** MPT Papanikolas reported that the Town held a successful vote-by-mail election and thanked the Board of Election Supervisors and Clerk Harper for the fast implementation of a new election process. He also commended TM Broadbent and Treasurer Rodriguez for working closely together to keep the Administration Department running.

Mayor Isler said he was present during the counting of ballots and confirmed that the Election judges completed the canvassing and counting of the 673 ballots in approximately six hours.

TM Broadbent commended Treasurer Rodriguez for being elected President of her professional organization, the International Public Management Association for Human Resources.

**Code Compliance:** CM Osmond said he is proud to report that, under his tenure, the Code Compliance Department became fully staffed and implemented a system of tracking data that will allow it to spot long-term trends and stay ahead of the curve. He hopes to leave this as a legacy for the next Council.

**Public Safety:** Mayor Isler commended BHPD for doing a great job in protecting the Town. They are forward looking, innovative and friendly to anyone visiting their station.

**Public Works:** CM Sweep thanked the Public Works crew for continuing to pick up trash and recycling despite the ongoing pandemic. Residents appreciate it greatly. He reported that more litter is present on Town streets since the monthly Town cleanups have been suspended. He asked residents to refrain from littering and possibly help pick it up on their own.

**Parks, Recreation, Education & Civic Affairs:** CM Dewey thanked the Board of Election Supervisors and Clerk Harper for their fast turnaround in implementing a vote-by-mail election and the voters for voting in great numbers. She also reminded everyone to continue to adhere to all safety procedures to minimize the spread of the Coronavirus while businesses and public facilities are reopening.

CM Dewey reported on the activities of Town organizations. The Green Team has suspended its Town cleanups for the duration of the pandemic but will lend its tools to anyone who wishes to pick up litter individually. It is also working on completing the Town's *Sustainable Maryland* recertification, and is

holding another ‘Trees of Distinction’ contest. The Education Advisory Committee is working with the PTA to keep the Berwyn Heights Elementary school in its position on the PGCPS’ facilities improvement plan.

The Recreation Council is arranging a series of virtual concerts throughout the summer and BHPD is planning a virtual celebration of ‘National Night In’ on August 4.

## **7. Councilmember Statement re George Floyd Protests & Discussion**

CM Dewey moved and CM Sweep seconded to receive Councilmembers’ statements on the George Floyd protests. The motion passed 5 to 0.

Mayor Isler said the Council received an e-mail asking the Council to issue a statement regarding the killing of George Floyd, an unarmed African American man, by a white police officer on May 25, 2020 and the ensuing protests. Councilmembers each drafted individual statements that were published on the Town website and social media. Councilmembers also wanted to read their statements into the public record tonight.

Mayor Isler, MPT Papanikolas, CM Sweep, and CM Dewey read their statements condemning the killing of George Floyd, the behavior of the officers who detained Mr. Floyd, and the continued existence of racism in policing and in American society, generally. CM Osmond made a brief remark regarding prejudice and racism.

Chief Antolik condemned the killing of George Floyd and explained BHPD’s approach to policing. He said that BHPD’s policies on the use of force already comply with recommendations put forward by the International Association of Chiefs of Police in response to the George Floyd incident and that he holds his officers to the highest standards in their interactions with the public. He welcomed Councilmembers to ride along with officers on patrol and to review BHPD policies and practices.

There ensued discussion about available training opportunities for BHPD officers, the proposed removal of school resource officers from Prince George’s County schools, policing in the context of the racial makeup of Prince George’s County, methods of engaging youth and the community generally, and building a respectful relationship with LGBTQ individuals.

## **8. Announcement of Election Results**

Clerk Harper announced the results of the June 9 Town Council election. Out of 2073 active registered voters in Berwyn Heights 675 voted, approximately double the number of recent elections. Amanda Dewey was elected Mayor with 500 votes (74% of those who voted); Jodie Kulpa-Eddy was elected Mayor Pro Tem with 461 votes (68%); Jason Papanikolas received 383 votes (57%); Chris Brittan Powell 326 votes (48%); and Ethan Sweep 311 votes (46%).

## **9. Outgoing Mayor’s Remarks**

Mayor Isler thanked residents for their support of him as a first-time Councilmember and Mayor throughout a difficult term. He decided not to run for another term because he cannot give the job his full attention at this time and does not want to do a disservice to the Town. He thanked the Council, TM Broadbent and Chief Antolik for working together to produce a large package of legislative accomplishments.

Incoming Mayor Dewey asked if CM Osmond had some final remarks. CM Osmond said he stepped up when there was a need to fill a vacancy. It was a pleasure to help and serve. He would do it again if given the opportunity.

#### **10. Swearing-in of Council**

Mayor Dewey said she was sworn in the afternoon by the Clerk of the Circuit Court in Upper Marlboro and will now swear in the remaining Councilmembers. The paperwork will be signed after the meeting in Councilmember's driveways. She swore in MPT Kulpa-Eddy first and then CMs Papanikolas, Sweep and Brittan Powell.

#### **11. Incoming Mayor's Remarks**

Mayor Dewey thanked everyone for their support. She said it will be an honor to serve the Town about which she cares so much. It is also a responsibility, which will require leadership during an ongoing pandemic and a national conversation about racial inequality. She believes the Town will get through it together if everyone is open and brave about facing the challenges.

Mayor Dewey announced the departmental assignments of the incoming Council. MPT Kulpa-Eddy will lead Parks, Recreation, Education & Civic Affairs (PRECA), CM Papanikolas the Administration Department, CM Sweep the Public Works Department and CM Brittan-Powell the Code Compliance Department.

Mayor Dewey said she is looking forward to working with the new Council. Her priorities include better communication with residents, tending to local partnerships with neighboring cities, Prince George's County and the State of Maryland, conservation and sustainability, education, and improving walkability and bikeability of the Town.

#### **12. Remarks of the Incoming Council**

MPT Kulpa-Eddy thanked the voters for reelecting her. Having been on the Council before, she hopes to bring her experience and historical perspective to discussions on challenges and opportunities the Council might face during this term.

CM Papanikolas said he looks forward to working with this well qualified Council and pledged to always listen and respect their opinions even if he is not in agreement. He thanked the voters for voting in a new way in record numbers, as well his family and friends for helping with his campaign.

CM Brittan Powell said he loves Berwyn Heights where he raised his children and where he will spend the rest of his life. He thinks this will be a good Council and looks forward to working with everyone to get the Town through what he believes will be an economically tough time.

CM Sweep thanked the voters for reelecting him. He was a novice during the previous term and pledges to continue to learn from other leaders to become a better Councilmember. He is excited to continue the work begun during the last term to make the Town better and to make Berwyn Heights voices heard at the county and state levels.

Mayor Dewey concluded saying she believes there is no limit to what the Council can achieve working in partnership with the Town's great staff.

#### **13. Citizen Discussion**

Mike Attick, 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, called to congratulate Councilmembers on their election.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Signed: *Kerstin Harper*, Town Clerk